

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 4037

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, KS, KN

SUBJECT: KIM YONG-SAM PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: SEOUL 3875

1. NDP LEADER KIM YONG-SAM HELD PRESS CONFERENCE JUNE 5 TO REAFFIRM NDP COMMITMENT TO "RESTORATION FREE DEMOCRACY" IN ROK. IN HIS FIRST SIGNIFICANT CRITICISM OF ROKG SINCE MONTH BEFORE MAY 21 MEETING WITH PRESIDENT PAK, KIM ATTEMPTED TO REFUTE RECENT CHARGES THAT HIS COOPERATION WITH ROKG ON NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUE WAS ABANDONMENT NDP GOAL TO CHANGE POLITICAL SYSTEM.

2. KIM BLAMED GOVERNMENT FOR EXAGGERATING ENEMY STRENGTH AND FOSTERING DEFEATIMS. HE SAID THAT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION PROVIDES NO IMMEDIATE CAUSE FOR FEAR AND NO JUSTIFICATION FOR DEPRIVATION OF FREEDOM. RATHER HE SAID MOST EFFECTIVE DEFENSE AGAINST COMMUNISTS IS DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM. IN THIS CONTEXT HE CALLED FOR ESTORATION NORMAL CONSTITUTIONAL POLITICS BY:

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--LIFTING EMERGENCY MEASURE NINE

-- ELIMINATING PRESS CENSORSHIP

--ENDING ADVERTISING PRESSURES ON TONGA ILBO

--STOPPING "UNPRECEDENTEDLY RUTHLESS
OPPRESSION" AGAINST CAMPUSES

3. KIM SAID THAT US HAS LEFT NO DOUBT OF SECURITY
COMMITMENT TO ROK IN PRESENT PERIOD FOLLOWING FALL
OF VIETNAM. HOWEVER, HE NOTED THAT DURATION OF
THIS RELATIONSHIP UNSURE SINCE U.S. POLICY IS
DETERMINED TO LARGE EXTENT BY PUBLIC AND
CONGRESSIONAL OPINION. FOR THIS REASON HE
ARGUED THAT IN LONG RUN IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR KOREA
TO BECOME A "DOMOCRATIC ALLY" OF US.

4. IN RESPONSE TO PRESS QUESTIONS ON NDP FUTURE
ACTIVITIES KIM STATED PARTY WISHED TO WORK FOR
CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT BY PEACEFUL MEANS RATHER THAN
"UNUSUAL METHODS." HE DENIED DISCUSSION WITH
PRESIDENT OF POSSIBLE BIPARTISAN CABINET AND
SAID HE HAD NO PLANS TO TRAVEL OUTSIDE KOREA.

5. AS POSTIVE STEP FOR EASING TENSION IN REGION
KIM CALLED FOR ESTABLISHMENT SIX NATION NORTHEAST
ASIA PEACE CONFERENCE (U.S., JAPAN, USSR, PRC, ROK,
NORTH KOREA). KIM SAID HE PREPARED TO VISIT PYONGYANG,
PEKING, OR MOSCOW TO DISCUSS THIS PROPOSAL.
KIM ALSO CALLED ON NORTH KOREA TO CHANGE ITS POSITION
OF OPPOSITION TO UN MEMBERSHIP BY BOTH NORTH AND
SOUTH; HE SUGGESTED THAT U.S. AND JAPAN RECOGNIZE
NORTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT IN RETURN FOR USSR AND PRC
RECOGNITION OF SOUTH.

6. KIM PROPOSED THAT DOMESTIC SITUATION BE "RENOVATED"
THROUGH JOINT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON
NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION TO LOOK INTO GOVERNMENT
CORRUPTION. HE CHALLENGED GOVERNMENT POSITION
THAT VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA FELL BECAUSE OF LACK OF
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UNITY, RATHER HE SAID IT WAS BECAUSE RULERS LOST
CONFIDENCE OF PEOPLE THROUGH DICTATORSHIP,
INJUSTICE AND CORRUPTION.

7. KIM ENDED STATEMENT WITH WARNING TO KIM IL-SONG
NOT TO PROVOKE WAR UNDER FALSE ASSUMPTION THAT
THERE IS ANY SYMPATHY FOR COMMUNISM IN ROK.

8. AFTERNOON PAPERS HAVE KEPT EMERGENCY MEASURE NINE IN MIND AND HAVE BEEN SELECTIVE IN REPORTING KIM'S REMARKS. THEY REPORT PROPOSALS FOR PEACE CONFERENCE AND JOINT ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM. PRESS SO FAR HAS NOT MENTIONED DEMAND REPEAL EMERGENCY MEASURE NINE, ELIMINATION PRESS CENSORSHIP, CHARGE OF CAMPUS OPPRESSION OR ACCUSATION THAT GOVERNMENT EXAGGERATING DANGER TO NATIONAL SECURITY. ONLY TONGA ILBO REPORTED CONTINUING ADVERTISING BOYCOTT.

9. COMMENT: KIM YONG-SAME CLEARLY SEES NEED TO PUBLICLY DISPEL ANY DOUBT THAT HE HAS COMPROMISED NDP COMMITMENT TO CHANGE YUSHIN SYSTEM AS PART OF DEAL WITH PRESIDENT. HOWEVER, KIM'S REMARKS, WHILE CRITICAL OF GOVERNMENT, ARE MORE MODRATE THAN HIS PAST STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN. KIM ALSO IS UNLIKELY TO RISK RETALIATION UNDER EMERGENCY MEASURE WITHOUT SOME ASSURANCES THAT GOVERNMENT WILL NOT REACT TOO STRONGLY. IN ANY EVENT PRESS CENSORSHIP UNDER EMERGENCY MEASURE EFFECTIVELY LESSENS IMPACT KIM'S CRITICISM WHILE ALLOWING HIM TO RESTORE TO SOME EXTENT IMAGE AS GENUINE OPPOSITION LEADER.
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